

REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance of claims 11, 13-18 and 21-29 are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 19 is objected to as being of improper dependent form. Applicants cancel claim 19 herein, thereby removing the basis for the objection.

Claims 17, 19 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite due to the recitation of “a face” and “a clamping jaw.” Along with amendments to claims 11 and 26, claims 17 and 24 are amended herein to claim a particular face and a particular clamping jaw. Applicants submit that the amended claims are definite, and thus, the rejection should be removed.

Claims 11-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hirschfeld et al (US 6,892,602). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as set forth below.

Claim 11 is amended to state that an elevation protrudes toward the casing tube from a first face of a first clamping jaw that faces the casing tube. Support for this amendment is present in FIG 1b. As illustrated in the figure (reproduced below), face 14b of clamping jaw 14 faces the casing tube 3 and elevation 14c protrudes from face 14b toward the casing tube 3.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a cylindrical container 13. The container has a circular lid 20. Two rectangular protrusions, 15 and 15', extend from the top surface of the lid 20. Protrusion 15 is located towards the front-left edge of the lid, and protrusion 15' is located towards the front-right edge. The container 13 is shown in a perspective view, with the lid 20 slightly offset from the top of the cylinder.

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Although the inside face of the clamping part 13 faces toward the casing tube 2, the clamping tongues 15 of Hirschfeld's clamping part 13 protrude away from the casing tube 2. *See Fig. 3*. By contrast, amended claim 1 recites that the elevation protrudes toward the casing tube. Therefore, amended claim 1 is patentable over Hirschfeld.

Claims 13-18 and 21 are patentable due to their dependence from claim 11.

Applicants submit that Hirschfeld does not expressly or inherently disclose the feature of amended claim 22 that a leaf spring which engages in a cut-out of the casing tube is provided on the stator, wherein the cut-out provides an opening in the casing tube through which the leaf spring protrudes radially toward the steering spindle. The Office Action refers to Hirschfeld's clamping tongue 15 as a leaf spring and the section of decreased diameter of the casing tube 2 as corresponding to a cut-out. Although the diameter of the casing tube 2 on its right side (Fig. 1) may be smaller than its diameter on its left side, the casing tube 2 does not have an opening through which the clamping tongue 15 protrudes radially toward the steering shaft 3. There is no such opening. Also, the clamping tongue 15 does not protrude radially toward the steering shaft 3. Therefore, amended claim 22 is patentable over Hirschfeld.

Claims 23-27 are patentable due to their dependence from claim 22.

New claims 28 and 29 are added to further define the steering column arrangement of claim 22. Support for these claims is present, for example, in

FIGS. 1a, 1b, and 2, and paragraph [0033] of the specification. Claims 28 and 29 are patentable due to their dependence from claim 22.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this response or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 095309.56366US).

Respectfully submitted,

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